

The Random Jottings of Donald Jay from Nelson in Pendle.

THE TUMULI ON BEARDLEY HILL

In the heart of the British Isles, nestled amidst the rolling landscapes, lay the remnants of an ancient house on the crest of Beardley Hill. It stood as a silent witness to the mysteries that unfolded in its surroundings. The hill itself was adorned with enigmatic circular tumuli, raised mounds of earth that whispered tales of forgotten times.

According to local lore, the name "Beardley Hill" bore the echoes of a long-ago conflict. Its etymology traced back to the Saxon words "Beado," meaning battle, and "ley," signifying a field.

Thus, it was known as the "Battlefield." The hill and its tumuli were believed to be tied to an epic clash of warriors from ancient days.

Many speculated that these primitive mounds, scattered across the landscape, hailed from the enigmatic Celtic era. They were thought to be sepulchral monuments erected to honor a revered chieftain or to serve as the final resting place for fallen heroes who had perished on the battlefield. These humble mounds held secrets buried deep within their earthen embrace.

In the rugged expanse of the Pennine Range, where the wild and barren terrain stretched as far as the eye could see, the names of mountains, rocks, and streams all bore witness to the ancient inhabitants of Britain. It was as if the land itself had absorbed their stories, preserving them in the very fabric of its being. Though civilizations rose and fell, and cities crumbled into dust, these enduring remnants of the past stood strong—a testament to the indomitable spirit of those who came before.

Curiosity stirred within the hearts of those who beheld Beardley Hill and its surrounding tumuli. Scholars, historians, and archeologists ventured to uncover the secrets concealed beneath the ancient soil. They painstakingly excavated the mounds, unearthing relics and remains that painted a vivid picture of the past.

The whispers of history gradually came to life. Artifacts revealed intricate Celtic designs, weapons once wielded with bravery, and ornaments that spoke of a rich and vibrant culture. The fallen warriors, who had long since been lost to time, were now given a voice—an opportunity to share their stories with the present.

As the world awakened to the revelations from Beardley Hill, a sense of awe and reverence settled upon those who sought to understand the past. The tales of battles fought and lives laid to rest served as a reminder of the human experience that transcended the boundaries of time. The mounds, once seen as mere hillocks, became symbols of resilience and remembrance, inviting contemplation and connection with those who had gone before.

Today, Beardley Hill stands as a testament to the unyielding passage of time, a bridge between forgotten eras and the present. It reminds us that as we traverse the tapestry of history, our footsteps leave indelible imprints upon the land. The tumuli, those ancient guardians of the past, stand tall, inviting us to listen closely—to hear the echoes of battles fought, the whispers of fallen heroes, and the quiet triumph of the human spirit that endures throughout the ages.

By Donald Jay

A tumulus (plural tumuli) is a mound of earth and stones raised over a grave or graves. Tumuli are also known as barrows, burial mounds or *kurgans*, and may be found throughout much of the world. A cairn, which is a mound of stones built for various purposes, may also originally have been a tumulus.